THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Barring a few cases SKO-LDO dealerships, including those belonging to widows/SC/ST, are operating above economic level. As such there is no proposal pending for rehabilitation of any unviable SKO-LDO dealerships, belonging to these categories.

(b) No proposal is under consideration of the Government for increase in allocation of products for any SKO-LDO dealership, belonging to these categories or for conversion of such dealerships to LPG distributorships or retail outlet dealerships.

(c) Does not arise.

Marketing contracts with oil exporters

584. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of existing oil pool deficit;

(b) wherther it is a fact that Government have shown reluctance to enter into forward marketing contracts with crude oil exporters;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what is the overall effect on the efforts to liquidate the oil pool deficit, as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) The cumulative oil pool deficit as on 31-3-2001 was Rs. 12,594 crore. The position of the oil pool account as on 31st March, 2002 would depend *inter-alia* upon the prices of crude oil/petroleum products in the international market, exchange rate, domestic selling prices of controlled products, etc.

(b) IOC has been procuring crude oil for PSU refineries from the national oil companies of oil exporting countries. These companies do not offer any forward contracts.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (b) above.